

statute. While it appears likely that the Zika virus disproportionately affects poor and marginalized populations, it also appears that there is a significant market for the Zika virus medical products in developed nations, which would render the Zika virus ineligible for addition to the PRV list under the statute at this time.

FDA agrees that we need to do all that we can to facilitate the development of and access to medical products as quickly as possible to respond to the Zika virus outbreak. We fully believe that the incentives currently available for the Zika product development—such as funding for research and development, and clinical trial costs from government and non-governmental organizations—as well as extensive HHS technical assistance for product developers, are sufficient to help bring Zika products to market. FDA is fully prepared to use its authorities to the fullest extent appropriate—including proven mechanisms to speed the availability of medical products for serious diseases—to help facilitate the development and availability of products with the potential to mitigate this outbreak as quickly as the science will allow. However, expanding the PRV program by adding diseases or conditions that do not meet the criteria for inclusion is unnecessary, weakens the effectiveness of the PRV program, and creates an undue burden on FDA that can ultimately harm public health.

As you are aware, the Administration has asked Congress for approximately \$1.9 billion in emergency funding to enhance our ongoing efforts to prepare for and respond to the Zika virus, both domestically and internationally. Approving this funding request, which includes support for medical product development and procurement, is essential for sustaining HHS's effort to effectively incentivize the development and availability of medical products for the Zika virus.

Thank you, again, for contacting us concerning this matter. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me. The same letter has been sent to your cosigners.

Sincerely,

DAYLE CRISTINZIO,
*Acting Associate Commissioner for
Legislation.*

NO RATE REGULATION OF BROADBAND INTERNET ACCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. KATHY CASTOR

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, April 15, 2016

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 2666) to prohibit the Federal Communications Commission from regulating the rates charged for broadband Internet access service:

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition to H.R. 2666, the No Rate Regulation Act. Many small businesses and many of my neighbors in the Tampa Bay area have experienced loss of internet, TV and phone services. I want to ensure that my neighbors and businesses are protected—I am fighting for them to receive the services they paid for. The No Rate Regulation Act aims to dismantle the open internet and take the “cop off the beat” by hamstringing the FCC’s ability to protect the consumer. Because of these

concerns on behalf of my neighbors and small businesses, today I will vote against this bill.

This is timely legislation for all the wrong reasons. On April 1 of this year, Frontier Communications assumed Verizon’s TV, internet and land-line phone services in the Tampa Bay area. Since the transition, small businesses and individual consumers in Florida have experienced loss of internet, TV and phone services. Consumers are paying for services they are not receiving. Even now, customers are reporting waiting for Frontier’s technicians that are “no shows”. Frontier appears to be unable to provide the necessary services to my neighbors, at the present time.

I am here today to ensure all customers are protected. I have been fighting to protect the consumer and for robust public interest reviews. On February 2nd I stated in my letter to the FCC regarding the proposed Bright House Networks/Time Warner Cable/Charter merger that it is appropriate for the FCC to investigate that “best practices” are present on behalf consumers.

The awesome power of the internet should be used to build up our community and grow opportunity for our children. I am proud that last year Tampa was selected as one of only 27 communities nationwide to participate in ConnectHOME, which promotes locally tailored solutions to help bridge the gap in digital access for working-class households by addressing the barriers they have to high-speed broadband.

We should be dedicated to significant community boosts in access to digital opportunities for our students. We should be working with all agencies to develop the types of skills needed to secure today’s higher paying jobs for all our kids. Instead of inviting a promising tomorrow, Republicans have chosen to focus on a bad bill with no future today.

On the House floor Republicans have offered the No Rate Regulation Act. If passed it could undermine key provisions in the FCC’s Open Internet order and harm the Commission’s ability to protect consumers. This bill simply fails to define a clear definition and experts assert that the bill could result in unintended consequences. The No Rate Regulation Act is overly broad and extends far beyond the goals of codifying the FCC’s forbearance from applying provisions of the Communications Act related to tariffs, rate approval, or other forms of utility regulation. The FCC should not be stymied in their participation of mergers and acquisitions like the Bright House/TWC/Charter proposal. For example, I have said that BHN’s Connect2Compete Program should be maintained, but as written, this legislation could undermine the FCC’s ability to encourage customer service agreements that protect the most vulnerable.

We have seen the Comcast Universal merger approval include the supply of an affordable internet program called the Internet Essentials. These stipulations are important and should be maintained in other deals moving forward.

Mr. Chair, today I will vote against this Republican bill that could undermine key provisions in the FCC’s Open Internet Order and harm the FCC’s ability to protect consumers. We should not be undermining the FCC. This legislation could exacerbate already negative consequences for my neighbors in the Tampa Bay area. I will continue work to protect consumers and neighbors in my community and vote no on the No Rate Regulation Act.

COMMENDING BETSY FLEMING
FOR HER SERVICE AS PRESIDENT OF CONVERSE COLLEGE

HON. TREY GOWDY

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 18, 2016

Mr. GOWDY. Mr. Speaker, today I commend President Betsy Fleming of Converse College for her service to higher education and her remarkable impact on South Carolina.

After growing up in Spartanburg, President Fleming left in 1984 to embark on her journey to become a renowned art-historian. Throughout her career, she held curatorial positions at several prominent museums across the United States as well as overseas in London. Prior to being named President of Converse College in 2005, Fleming served as the executive director of the Gibbes Museum of Art in Charleston, South Carolina.

Under President Fleming’s eleven years of leadership, Converse College experienced incredible transformation. During her tenure, Converse reduced its tuition by 43 percent and celebrated its largest undergraduate enrollment in over 25 years, becoming a national leader in affordability and value. Furthermore, Converse gained full NCAA Division II membership in eleven sports programs and raised more than \$76 million in support.

In addition to her impact on the Converse College community, President Fleming’s service extends above and beyond her commitment in Spartanburg. An Aspen Institute Liberty Fellow, President Fleming serves on the Council of Presidents for the Association of Governing Boards (AGB), the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC) Steering Committee in the Future of Higher Education, and on the Board of Directors for both the Federal Reserve Bank of Richmond, Charlotte Branch and Blue Cross Blue Shield of South Carolina.

President Fleming’s impact on students, staff, and faculty will always be remembered, and her legacy will transform the future of Converse College. I thank President Fleming for her extraordinary service and congratulate her on her retirement. We look forward to the next chapter of her remarkable life as she continues to serve our community, state and country.

IN MEMORY OF RACHEL HOUSTON

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 18, 2016

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, I stand today to remember and honor the life, faith, and service of Rachel Margaret Houston. A former legislative assistant in my office, Rachel passed away on April 10, 2016, at the far-too-young age of 32.

Those of us who had the honor to know Rachel knew her kind heart, deep faith, and compassion for others. Friends and former co-workers remembered her as a “wonderful” and “lovely person,” and a “soft, sweet spirit,” with a “bright smile, kind words, and warm heart.” Rachel was that rare person who could reach out to someone new and make him or her feel welcomed, supported, and encouraged. Her kindness left a mark on all who